



بروني دارالسلام

BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

newsletter

Published by the Department of Information
PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

MAY & JUNE 2004

Brunei hosts 18th ASEAN Labour Ministers Meeting

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkhiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam is confident that ASEAN would successfully meet all new challenges.

The sovereign expressed this at the opening of the 18th ASEAN Labour Ministers Meeting on May 13 at the International Convention Centre.

According to His Majesty, this confidence is based on two factors namely cooperation, understanding and solidarity; and the faith ASEAN has in the talent of its people.

In his keynote address, His Majesty also said that for a successful implementation of national and regional labour policies, there must be a close cooperation and co-ordination with the people in the government and private sector.

The two-day meeting was attended by Ministers responsible for labour from ASEAN member-states. It was preceded by the 3rd Senior Labour Officials Meeting from May 10-11. ASEAN Labour Ministers also held consultations with their counterparts from China, Japan and the Republic of Korea on May 14.



His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam declares the 18th ASEAN Labour Ministers Meeting open



His Majesty with delegates of the 18th ASEAN Labour Ministers Meeting

BRUNEI DARUSSALAM NEWSLETTER

is published fortnightly by the Department of Information. It reports on government, social and business events in the country. All money values are expressed in Brunei dollars \$, unless otherwise stated. Any information in this newsletter may be reproduced; a clipping of the publication would be appreciated. For free subscription (excluding postage) write to the Distribution Division, The Department of Information, Old Airport, Berakas BB 3510, Brunei Darussalam.

Editorial Staff

Editor

Sastra Sarini Haji Julaini

Reporter

Hajah Noorhijrah Haji Idris

Layout Designer

Hajah Zaianit Haji Noorkhan

Photographs

**Photography Division of
Department of Information**

YOUR TURN

The next issue of the Brunei Darussalam newsletter will appear on JULY 2004. If there are events relating to our country you would like featured in this newsletter please call us on Tel:02-383400/ext.BDN Division or better still, send us a report with a picture, if possible. All editorial rights reserved.

PALACE NEWSROUND... PALACE NEWSROUND...



His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam received audiences at the Istana Nurul Iman from:

- ❶ The Honourable Tan Sri Hasmy Agam, Special Envoy for Malaysia's Prime Minister on May 1.
- ❷ His Excellency Adalbert Ritmueller, the outgoing Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany on May 12.
- ❸ Admiral Sir Alan West, the United Kingdom First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff on May 26.



Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Saleha received audiences on May 13 at the Istana Nurul Iman from the spouses of ASEAN Labour Ministers.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah received audience at the Istana Nurul Iman from His Excellency Christian David Bennett, the newly High Commissioner of Australia to Brunei on May 6.



HM: Heal the world with benevolence

Muslims and humanity should try to practise Prophet Muhammad's leadership style if they are to have any chance of setting the world free from predicaments.

Prophet Muhammad's leadership style is characterised by the rejection of all forms of cruelty. It appears promising when compared with the alternatives and ideologies that had been tried and failed to deliver the world from conflicts and crises.

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah remarked on May 1 during the Prophet Muhammad's birthday anniversary.

The world is longing for justice and peace and everyone is talking about them. "But things have not changed: justice is fraught with dilemma and peace remains obscure," he said.

With today's media competing to broadcast news on casualties from around the world, Muslims should

reflect on the leadership and teachings of Prophet Muhammad.

According to the sovereign, one of the hallmarks of Prophet Muhammad's character was that he was a champion of peace who loved and practised humanitarianism.

"Throughout the history of Islam, Prophet Muhammad was never spared from all kinds of ill-treatment but he did not respond with anything but kindness," said His Majesty.



His Majesty and members of the royal family join thousands to celebrate the birthday anniversary of Prophet Muhammad.

Oil and Gas Industry Celebrates 75th Anniversary

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam on May 8 officiated the 75th year anniversary of oil and gas industry at the Billionth Barrel Monument in Seria.

Brunei discovered oil in 1929 at Seria. In 1991, a Billionth Barrel Monument was built to commemorate the production of its one billionth barrel. Most of the oil and gas are exported to Japan, China, India and ASEAN countries.



His Majesty at the 75th year anniversary of Brunei's oil and gas industry

Around Brunei with the sovereign

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam made an unscheduled visit to *Mukim* Mentiri of Brunei-Muara district and a work visit to Royal Brunei Air Force on May 11 and 17 respectively.

At *Mukim* Mentiri, the sovereign visited three schools, housing areas, community center, industrial area, civil service club and homes of headman of *Mukim* Mentiri and village head of Batu Marang.

During the visit to Royal

Brunei Air Force in Rimba, His Majesty toured various sections. The sovereign also visited the Royal Brunei Air Force is branch in Berakas and Air Squadron Regiment Number 33 in Penanjong Garrison.

Courtesy visit to BAHRAIN

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam on May 21 was on courtesy visit to Bahrain.

The sovereign also met and held discussions with His Majesty Sheikh Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa, the King of Bahrain at Al-Bustan's Palace.



His Majesty held discussions with His Majesty Sheikh Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa at Al-Bustan Palace in Bahrain

RBAF celebrates 43rd anniversary

Ministry of Defence would soon release a 'Defence White Paper' in its step towards a focus and professional defence management.

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam

made the announcement on the 43rd anniversary of the Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF) at Penanjong Camp.

His Majesty also said that the ministry would also launch its 'Ministry of Defense and RBAF

Strategic Planning'. According to the sovereign, both papers are essential as planning and decision-making could not be made randomly or in an abrupt manner but it required an organised methodology and approach.

Anniversary of RBAF is celebrated every May 31.

HM to thanksgiving ceremony

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam attended a thanksgiving banquet on May 24 at the International Convention Centre in Berakas.

The ceremony was hosted by a committee involving people who were recently conferred with titles by His Majesty. Thirty people were conferred with or promoted to the title of *Pehin Manteri* and *Cheteria* last April.



Their Majesties at the thanksgiving ceremony organised by the newly conferred Pehin Manteris' and Cheterias'

Citizens receive keys & land lots

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam issued land grants and keys to new homes to 269 recipients on June 5. The ceremony was held at Delima Satu Primary School.

From the total recipients, five received land grants based at the Lambak Kanan National Housing scheme; three received housed keys

under the Kampong Rimba Indigenous Landless Scheme; 64 received house keys under the Kampong Tungku (Katok 'A') Indigenous Landless Scheme, 14 received house keys to twin house under Kampong Rimba Indigenous Landless Scheme; 147 received house keys to twin house under Resettlement Scheme at Kampong Rimba; 19 received house

keys under Resettlement Scheme at Kampong Tungku; and 17 received house keys under Resettlement Scheme at Kampong Mata-Mata.

His Majesty also toured the school; visited Iqra Primary School; Health Screening Centre in Jalan Delima Dua; private sectors located at Jalan Muara and Beribi; and several homes of the recipients.



Prince of Wales receives an award organised by Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies

HM awards Prince of Wales

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam had awarded Prince Charles, the Prince of Wales with 'The Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah International Prize for Promotion of Dialogue Between Islamic and Western Civilisations' award.

The ceremony which took place on June 24 in London was organised by Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, an associated institution with University of Oxford.

Prince of Wales was chosen by the International Jury commissioned by the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies because of his earnest efforts to promote dialogue between the Islamic and Western civilisation.

HM on state visit to Pakistan

Brunei Darussalam has a deep belief in the principles of dialogue and negotiations in the conduct of all international relations.

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam said this at a state banquet during a three-day state visit to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on May 18.

The sovereign said that it is the best way to offer the citizens with hope and confidence.

"We believe it is the only means of ensuring world order and enabling the world community to create a good and decent future for all their ordinary citizens," said His Majesty.

His Majesty said that for this particular reason, this is why Brunei has always been fully committed to playing whatever role she could in the United Nations, the OIC and in her own regional association.

Pakistan, His Majesty said, has the same beliefs and supports this approach.

"That is also why we particularly wish to offer our support to you and your government, Mr President in your similar commitment to the United Nations, the OIC and to the South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation," said His Majesty.

His Majesty also commended Pakistan on her effort to work closely with her neighbours and to bring long term peace, development and stability to the great sub-continent shared by the people of South Asia.

For this to take root and grow, the seeds must be planted in the deep rich soil of tolerance, common understanding, and mutual respect. And I therefore salute your own efforts and those of your government and the people of Pakistan to cultivate this ground, said His Majesty.

At the royal address, His Majesty also thanked the government of Pakistan for her commitment in strengthening the bilateral relations, friendship and cooperation of both nation-states. His Majesty also thanked the assistance offered by the people of Pakistan in the public affairs, business and many other walks of life in Brunei which have been greatly valued.

The sovereign also expressed his gratitude for various cooperation agreed between the two counting.

Diplomatic relation between Brunei and Pakistan was established soon after Brunei resumed her full independence in 1984. Cooperation between the two nations has long exists in vast areas such as defense, health, education and professional training.



His Majesty held a one-to-one meeting with His Excellency General Pervez Musharraf, the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan



His Majesty with the Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, His Excellency Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali



His Majesty and His Excellency at a state banquet



His Excellency presents His Majesty with a token of appreciation



His Majesty inspects guard of honour upon arrival



Bilateral talks between senior officers of both nation-states



His Majesty with the Chairman of the Emerging Partner, Mr Moeer Qureshi



His Majesty meets His Excellency Shaukat Aziz, Pakistan's Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs



His Majesty consents to give a trophy for Polo competition



His Majesty visits the Remount Depot Mona



His Majesty delivers a royal speech at a state banquet

Brunei-Ukraine ties to widen areas of cooperation

Brunei is impressed with the government of Ukraine and its people in placing their many human, cultural and natural resources at the service of modern nation building. Ukraine is witnessing encouraging economic growth and many improvements in the lives of its people.

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam remarked at a state banquet hosted by His Excellency Leonid Kuchma in conjunction with His Majesty's four-day state visit to Ukraine on June 18.

"You have also encouraged the research and innovation that are so essential for a nation's economy if it is to expand and provide for its people in today's world on today's term," said His Majesty.

According to His Majesty, this made Ukraine an attractive destination for trade and investment. With recent state visit of His Excellency to Brunei in March, His Majesty said that it is the right time to consider how to build a lasting partnership and where it would be appropriate in widening the scope of cooperation.

"In this respect, we are particularly interested in following up some of the thoughts we shared in March about security and defence cooperation," said His Majesty.

The sovereign also said there is much to discuss in many other aspects of cooperation. These would include exchanges of information on the potential of each country particularly in areas of trade, investment and tourism.



Bilateral discussions between both nation-states



His Majesty visits the Ukraine Army Navy Base at Sevastopol



His Majesty listens to a briefing at one of the commercial airplane based at Gostomel Airfield



A traditional performance display by Tatars Crimea



His Majesty visits Muslim burial ground dating back to the Khan Dynasty

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam received honorary doctorate from the National Technical University of Ukraine 'Kyiv Polytechnic Institute' on June 18.

His Majesty who was on a four-day state visit to Ukraine was awarded because of his relentless efforts in developing Brunei especially in areas of economy, social welfare and education.

According to the university, His Majesty is also active in enhancing Brunei's relations at international and regional level besides forging closer bilateral relations with Ukraine.

"I feel deeply privileged to receive an Honorary Doctorate from this renowned seat of learning. I know its magnificent record of scholarship and achievement holds a special place in the hearts of all Ukrainians," said His Majesty.

His Majesty also added that Brunei would always conduct its foreign affairs based on friendship, respect and cooperation, pride in oneself and respect for others.

HM receives honorary doctorate



His Majesty receives honorary doctorate from the National Technical University of Ukraine 'Kyiv Polytechnic Institute'

HM TO UKRAINE – LOG BOOK

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam was on a four-day state visit to Ukraine.

June 17:

- His Majesty arrived at the Baryspol International Airport in Ukraine

- A one-to-one meeting between His Majesty and His Excellency President Leonid Kuchma of Ukraine at Mariinsky Palace was held.

June 18:

- A visit by His Majesty to Glory

Alley Monument where he consented to lay a wreath at the Tomb of Unknown Soldiers.

- His Majesty received an Honorary Doctorate from The National Technical University of Ukraine 'Kyiv Polytechnic Institute'

- A visit by His Majesty to Gostomel Airfield of The Aviation Scientific and Technical Complex.

- His Majesty attended the State Banquet at Mariinsky Palace.

June 19:

A visit by His Majesty to Alpha Training Centre for Ukraine Security Services.

June 20:

- His Majesty visited the Ukrainian Navy based at Sevastopol, Crimea.

- A visit by His Majesty to Bakhchisarai Khan Palace at Simferopol, Crimea.

His Majesty congratulates the newlywed royal couple



HM to royal wedding in Jordan

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam attended a reception in conjunction with the royal wedding of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hamzah bin Al-Hussein, the Crown Prince of Jordan and Her Royal Highness Princess Noor Hamzah.

It was held on May 28 at Zahran Palace at Jabal Amman in Jordan.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah and His Royal Highness Prince Abdul Qawi also attended the ceremony.



A group photo of His Majesty with (from left) Her Royal Highness Princess Basma binti Talal, Her Majesty Queen Rania, His Majesty King Abdullah II and His Excellency Dato Seri Setia Al-Sayed Walid Ismail Al-Kurdi



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah congratulates the newlywed royal couple

Girl Guide hosts Al-Quran reading competition

Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Saleha attended the prize giving ceremony for Brunei Darussalam Girl Guide Association's Al-Quran reading competition on May 7 at the Royal Berkshire Hall, Jerudong Park Country Club.



Her Majesty awards a trophy to the winner of Al-Quran reading competition.



Her Majesty awards a Hijrah Meritorious Award 2004 to one of the recipient.

Her Majesty to Prophet Muhammad birthday anniversary

Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Saleha attended a special gathering for women in conjunction with the celebration of Prophet Muhammad's birthday on May 10 at the International Convention Centre in Berakas.

Her Majesty also presented the *Hijrah Meritorious Award 2004* to three recipients.

Explore knowledge for economic development

Knowledge is the only constituent that could make a nation prosper as long as we employ it sensibly. We should also be bold in venturing into new fields that could develop the economy.

This was stated by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah at the 13th convocation ceremony of Institute Technology Brunei (ITB) on May 20 at the Jerudong Park and Country Club.

In his address, His Royal Highness said that sources and fields of knowledge could be explored which could encourage investment in technology. This would lead to employment opportunities besides offering the latest technology.

This could be seen from countries who have limited natural resources, said His Royal Highness.



His Royal Highness awards a graduate with Higher National Diploma.

His Royal Highness also said that locals should take inspiration from them as they have succeeded in developing their countries. They gained success because they exploit the latest knowledge and have a forward

economic vision.

Institute Technology Brunei's 13th convocation ceremony saw 123 graduates received their Higher National Diploma.

Crown Prince receives D.P.K.T.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince General Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah received “The Most Exalted Order of Paduka Keberanian Laila Terbilang – First Class” award from His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam on May 31 at the Penanjong Garrison.

Crown Prince on work visits



His Royal Highness Crown Prince General Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah was on series of working visit to the Royal Brunei Armed Force; State Mufti's Office; and two *Mukim* in Brunei Muara District:

- Royal Brunei Land Force and the Royal Brunei Armed Force's Training Centre on May 4.
- Royal Brunei Air Force and Royal Brunei Navy on May 10.
- Royal Brunei Services Force on May 12.
- State Mufti's Office on May 15.
- Mukim Gadong on June 2.
- Mukim Serasa on June 5.

PRINCESS RASHIDAH TO PRYNOSA AWARD

Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Rashidah Sa'adatul Bolkiah attended the sixth Princess Rashidah Young Nature Scientists Award (PRYNOSA) prize giving ceremony on May 15 at Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources.

PRYNOSA is one of the many activities introduced under the National Forest Sustainability Programme aimed at nurturing excellence among the young, especially in the field of natural science.

It was established in 1997 and jointly organised by the Forestry Department and the Brunei Shell Petroleum Company.



Her Royal Highness presents an award to one of the winners.

BRUNEI establish diplomatic relations with Tajikistan, Eriteria and Guatemala

The government of Brunei Darussalam had established diplomatic relations with the government of Eriteria, the Republic of Tajikistan and the government of Guatemala effective on May 13, June 2 and 30 respectively.

The signing of the joint communiqué that established the

diplomatic relations between Brunei Darussalam and the three countries was held at Brunei's Permanent Diplomatic Office to the United Nations (UN) in New York, United States of America.

Brunei was represented by His Excellency Haji Shofry bin Haji Abdul Ghafor, Permanent Representative of

Brunei to the UN.

His counterparts were His Excellency Ahmed Tahir Baduri of Eriteria; His Excellency Rashid Alimov of Tajikistan and His Excellency Gert Rosenthal of Guatemala. They are the Permanent Representatives to UN for their respective countries.

ICT: NGN and Cyber Park

Brunei Telecommunications Department had launched its New Generation Network (NGN), which was among the first in this region.

Pehin Dato Haji Zakaria bin Datu Mahawangsa Haji Sulaiman stated the matter at the official opening ceremony of the International Infocommunications (ICT) Technology Expo and Seminar on May 17 at the International Convention Centre in Berakas.

According to the Minister of Communications, NGN offers many new services

such as high speed internet access, virtual private network and multimedia services. It also provides platforms for small-and-medium-entrepreneurs

in Brunei to explore and create ICT business opportunities.

At an official launching of the Brunei ICT Award (BICTA) 2004 on

as a national agenda which should be supported by everyone in the society for an increase competitiveness in the era of k-economy.

Pehin Dato Haji Zakaria also said that the nation is heading towards k-economy and has got the basic that enables us to head towards it.

With the vision to become the region's cyber centre and to promote and develop the ICT industry in the nation, the government is actively planning to build a Cyber Park.

It will become a centre to nurture the development of technopreneurs in the field of ICT with incentives

such as incubator facilities and skill knowledge support. The park will also run innovative activities to create new knowledge.



Pehin Dato Haji Zakaria outlined the latest ICT developments in Brunei

June 30, the Minister also said that His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam had consented to make ICT development

Secondary school receives literature books

Sultan Hassan Secondary School received Canadian literature books from the High Commissioner of Canada in Temburong on May 19. The donation was presented by His Excellency Paul S.H.Lau, the High Commissioner of Canada to Brunei.



His Excellency Paul S.H.Lau presents literature books to the principal of Sultan Hassan Secondary School

OMEGA 300 launched

Brunei Shell Petroleum is committed with its health, safety and environment policy.

This was evident with the launching of its Refinery's New Bottom Loading Gantry and Terminal Automation System – OMEGA 3000 on May 25 at the Road Tanker Car loading area in Seria.

On hand to launch the new system was the Director of Transportation from Ministry of Communications, Pengiran Haji Mohd Yaakub bin Pengiran Haji Othman.

According to the Managing Director Brunei Liquefied Natural Gas (BLNG), Dato Paduka Awang Haji Hamdillah bin Haji Abdul Wahab, the BND3.6 million project was executed over a two-year period.

Haji Abdul Rahman bin Sirat, the Refinery Manager also said that the project was initiated to address Health, Safety and Environmental (HSE) issues. It is to reduce vapour exposure to the loading operator and reduce fire and safety risk at a loading gantry.

Her Royal Highness at the Brunei-Japan 20th anniversary celebration



Brunei-Japan tie celebrates its 20th anniversary

Brunei Darussalam and Japan share a strong bilateral relationship.

Her Royal Highness Pengiran Anak Puteri Hajah Masna made the address commemorating the 20th anniversary of diplomatic relation between Brunei and Japan on May 5.

Her Royal Highness who is the Ambassador-at-Large at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs highlighted various areas of cooperation between the two nations. These cooperations comprise of economics, education and culture.

According to Her Royal Highness, Japan is a major importer of Brunei's liquefied natural gas and crude oil. In 2003, an amount of \$3.15 billion of Brunei's oil and gas resources were exported to Japan.

Brunei and Japan established diplomatic relations in 1984.

Brunei's e-Government shows positive indicators

Brunei is on track in its bid to implement a successful e-Government which would bring to an era of paperless governance.

Pehin Dato Awang Haji Hazair bin Haji Abdullah, the Permanent Secretary at the Prime Minister's Office remarked on May 20 at the Canada Innovation Forum held at The Empire Hotel and Country Club.

According to the Permanent Secretary, modernising or improving the government with the purpose of ensuring good governance is always the top agenda in the government of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam.

He also said that the focus and attention accorded to the ICT industry was reflected for the first time in the 8th National Development Plan (NDP) 2001-2005. Initial allocation of BND526 million of the NDP was increased to more than BND900 million for the development

and implementation of infrastructure of the e-Government.

The Government of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, according to the Permanent Secretary, has invested heavily in building its National Information Infrastructure. It is one of the key priority areas in the implementation of the e-Government program as well as to keep pace with the needs of the nation.

In the Communication Sector, Brunei had established a nationwide broadband network called RAGAM 21 (*Rangkaian Global Aliran Multimedia* or Global Multimedia Network System 21). The availability of high bandwidth and high performance network infrastructure effectively enables the economy to prepare for the new age



Pehin Dato Haji Hazair says implementation of Brunei's e-government is on track

of global multimedia network, said the Permanent Secretary.

He also said that it is vital that there is timely-coordination and cooperation between all ministries, departments and employees to ensure that the ICT are implemented as scheduled.

Senior officials discuss matters related to the forestry field at the 7th meeting of ASEAN Senior Officials on Forestry



Technology advancement assist disseminate news

Brunei citizens abroad are updated with latest news about the country.

Development and latest technology advancements had been used wisely to disseminate news and local programs.

According to His Excellency Pengiran Haji Hamdan bin Pengiran Haji Ismail, the Ambassador of Brunei to Lao People's Democratic

Republic, news is received via the satellite and radio internet clearly.

His Excellency stated these during a courtesy visit by Brunei's delegation who were in Lao PDR for the Sixth Meeting of the ASEAN-COCI Sub-Committee on Information from June 1-3.

Brunei's delegation was led by Director of Information, Awang Haji Bujang bin Haji Masu'ut.

ASOF

The 7th Meeting of ASEAN Senior Officials on Forestry (7th ASOF) was held in Brunei on May 27. It was attended by senior officials from nine ASEAN countries.

The ASOF Meeting was a series of annual meeting by ASEAN forestry agencies to discuss mutual interests in the forestry field. The three-day meeting was chaired by Awang Haji Saidin bin Awang Salleh, the Acting Director of Brunei's Forestry Department.

Steps towards a healthier environment

Brunei is serious in combating against tobacco. Several steps had been taken such as banning tobacco advertisement, prohibition of smoking in all school and government buildings and an increase on taxes for tobacco by 200 per cent.

Brunei is the 18th country to ratify the World Health Organization Framework Convention for Tobacco Control (FCTC). It was designed to reduce the devastating health and economic impact of cigarette smoking. Brunei ratified the Convention on June 3 which made Brunei the seventh country to sign in the WHO Pacific Region.

On June 7, Brunei launched a '30 days without cigarettes' campaign. It was officiated by the Minister of Health, Pehin Dato Awang



Minister of Health listens to a briefing at the '30 days without cigarettes' campaign

Haji Bakar bin Haji Apong at the International Convention Centre. It was in conjunction with 'World No Tobacco Day' by the World Health Organisation.

According to the Minister, the ministry is currently preparing a ranking order on tobacco control

which is in accordance with 'The Framework Convention on Tobacco Control' by the WHO. The regulation contains control of advertisement, promotion and sponsorship of tobacco; packaging and labelling; smoking prohibitions and enforcement.

Brunei-Oman signs MOU

A cooperation was sealed under the field of cultural and heritage through the signing of Memorandum of Understanding between Brunei and the Sultanate of Oman on June 15.

Signatories to the signing ceremony were Pehin Dato Haji Awang Hussain bin Pehin Dato Haji Awang Mohd. Yusof, the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports while his counterpart was His Excellency Sayyid Haitham bin Tariq bin Taimour Al-Said, the Minister of Heritage and Culture from the Sultanate of Oman.

With the agreement, both parties had agreed to coordinate new training courses, visit of expertises and exchange of academic research in culture and heritage.

Agreements were also made on coordinating exchange visits of musicians, artists and participations in various exhibition and performances.

IBB records profit

Islamic Bank of Brunei (IBB) recorded a growth in its total assets.

This was disclosed at IBB's Annual General Meeting held on June 25 at the International Convention Centre.

Reports from audit and balance sheet of December 31, 2003 showed a growth in its total assets amounting to more than BND2,070,051,587 compared to BND1,862,924,514 in 2002.

IBB is one of three local Islamic banks in Brunei. It was established on January 13, 1993. Products and services provided by the bank are in accordance with the *sharia* or Islamic principles.



Pehin Dato Haji Abu Bakar and consort at the reception celebration for the 228th Independence Day of USA

Brunei-USA ties enhanced

There are still various potential trade areas which could be developed by Brunei and the United States of America (USA).

Pehin Dato Haji Awang Abu Bakar bin Haji Apong, the Ministry of Health said at a reception in conjunction with the 228th Independence Day of the United States of America on June 26.

According to the minister, the relationship could be further enhanced with cooperation in aquaculture.

"This is step towards promoting trade areas between both countries," said the minister.

His Excellency Gene Burl Christy, the Ambassador of USA to Brunei said that trade and investment between both countries continue to develop. This is through efforts and initiatives by the government of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam and officials from the embassy of the United States of America.

Brunei and USA established diplomatic relation in 1984. Brunei opened its embassy in Washington on March 1984.

FUTSAL

Information Department of Prime Minister's Office held a futsal match between local media agencies and invited teams on May 23 at the Hassanal Bolkiah National Stadium Sport Complex in Berakas.

The futsal match was held for the second time in conjunction with the production of *Pelita Brunei* (government official newspaper). It would celebrate its golden jubilee next year.

HEALTH PROMOTION 2004

National Committee on Health Promotion would be organising a National Convention on Health Promotion 2004 from July 24 to August 1 at the International Convention Centre in Berakas.

It consists of three main components which are workshops and seminar; health expo; and sport activities. The seminar and workshops would be held from July 26 – 29. This nine-day health expo would include health and trade fair. Sport activities would also be conducted such as walkathon, 'The Great Brunei Challenge' (mountain bike and cross country) and mass aerobic.

Convention is aimed towards increasing awareness among the public on health and also as a step to enhance the efforts in managing health problems related to life-style.



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah ibni His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah



Dayangku Sarah binti Pengiran Salleh Ab Rahaman

Royal wedding in September

Royal Customs and Tradition Department has announced that the royal wedding of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah ibni His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah to Dayangku Sarah binti Pengiran Salleh Ab Rahaman would take place on Wednesday, September 8.

Ceremonials for the royal wedding would commence with the opening of '*Istiadat Gendang Jaga-Jaga*' on Thursday, August 26.

His Royal Highness, 30, is the eldest prince of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam and Her Majesty The Raja Isteri while Dayangku Sarah binti Pengiran Salleh Ab Rahaman, 17, is the youngest daughter of Pengiran Salleh Ab Rahaman and Rinawaty binti Abdullah @ Suzanne Rahaman Aeby.

Brunei In Brief

Official name: Negara Brunei Darussalam

Capital: Bandar Seri Begawan

Land size: 5765 sq. km

Geographical Position: North-west of Borneo Island in Southeast Asia

National Carrier: Royal Brunei Airlines

Official Language: Malay

Official Religion: Islam

Official Website: www.brunel.gov.bn

PUBLIC WARNING. The trafficking of **controlled drugs** carries the **death penalty** in Brunei Darussalam.

Printed by BORNEO PRINTERS & TRADING SDN.BHD. Simpang 636, No.5,6,7, Block B, Ong Keh Beng Building, Jalan Tutong, Bandar Seri Begawan BF 1320, Negara Brunei Darussalam.